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Walt Disney's Failures Could Inspire Entrepreneurs

By Stephen Schochet

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by: **Stephen Schochet**

You are a struggling entrepreneur and sometimes it feels like you are pushing a 3 ton boulder up a steep hill. Costs keep mounting and you are considering giving up. Well before you do, check out these 10 setbacks that Walt Disney had, some were financial nightmares that put him millions of dollars in the red:

- 1) Walt formed his first animation company in Kansas City in 1921. He made a deal with a distribution company in New York, in which he would ship them his cartoons and get paid six months down the road. Flushed with success, he began to experiment with new storytelling techniques, his costs went up and then the distributor went bankrupt. He was forced to dissolve his company and at one point could not pay his rent and was surviving by eating dog food.
- 2) Walt created a mildly successful cartoon character in 1926 called Oswald the Rabbit. When he tried to negotiate with his distributor, Universal Studios, for better rates for each cartoon, he was informed that Universal had obtained ownership of the Oswald character and they had hired Disney's artists out from under him.
- 3) When Walt tried to get MGM studios to distribute Mickey Mouse in 1927 he was told that the idea would never work— a giant mouse on the screen would terrify women.
- 4) The Three Little Pigs was rejected by distributors in 1933 because it only had four characters, it was felt at that time that cartoons should have as many figures on the screen as possible. It later became very successful and played at one theater so long that the poster outside featured the pigs with long white beards.
- 5) Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs was sneak previewed to College Students in 1937 who left halfway during the film causing Disney great despair. It turned out the students had to leave early because of dorm curfew.

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6) Pinocchio in 1940 became extra expensive because Walt shut down the production to make the puppet more sympathetic than the lying juvenile delinquent as presented in the original Carlo Collodi story. He also resurrected a minor character, an unnamed cricket who tried to tell Pinocchio the difference between right and wrong until the puppet killed him with the mallet. Excited by the development of Jiminy Cricket plus the revamped, misguided rather than rotten Pinocchio, Walt poured extra money into the film's special effects and it ended up losing a million dollars in its first release.

7) For the premiere of Pinocchio Walt hired 11 midgets, dressed them up like the little puppet and put them on top of Radio City Music Hall in New York with a full day's supply of food and wine. The idea was they would wave hello to the little children entering into the theater. By the middle of the hot afternoon, there were 11 drunken naked midgets running around the top of the marquee, screaming obscenities at the crowd below. The most embarrassed people were the police who had to climb up ladders and take the little fellows off in pillowcases.

8) Walt never lived to see Fantasia become a success. 1940 audiences were put off by its lack of a story. Also the final scene, The Night On Bald Mountain sequence with the devil damning the souls of the dead, was considered unfit for children.

9) In 1942, Walt was in attendance for the premiere of Bambi. In the dramatic scene where Bambi's mother died, Bambi was shown wandering through the meadow shouting, "Mother! Where are you, Mother?" A teenage girl seated in the balcony shouted out, "Here I am Bambi!" The audience broke into laughter except for the red-faced Walt who concluded correctly that war-time was not the best time to release a film about the love-life of a deer.

10) The sentimental Pollyanna in 1960 made Walt cry at the studio screening but failed at the box office. Walt concluded that the title was off-putting for young boys.

Walt was human, he suffered through many fits of anger and depression through his many trials. Yet he learned from each setback, and continued to take even bigger risks which combined with the wisdom that experiencing failure can provide, led to fabulous financial rewards.

Stephen Schochet is the author and narrator of the audiobooks Fascinating Walt Disney and Tales Of Hollywood. The Saint Louis Post Dispatch says, "these two elaborate productions are exceptionally entertaining." Hear realaudio samples of these great, unique gifts at

Planning Your Walt Disney World Vacation

By I Henman

While it's always thought that children are the ones who dream of Walt Disney Vacations, there are adults that think of Walt Disney World as their ideal vacation spot as well. The greatest appeal for families to Disney has to be the ability to find something for everyone to do. Of course we're not just

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talking about group activities, but things for every individual too. This is probably one of the big reasons that families will go back each year, yet they never seem to get bored.

If you're seriously considering taking a Walt Disney vacation you should start your research on the Internet. Of course you can book a vacation right on Disney's website, there are other online travel sites that also have special family destination packages that might include Walt Disney world, as well as airfare, and hotels.

An important thing to keep in mind is that Walt Disney world vacations vary in price depending on the time of year you want to travel. Disney is also busier at particular times of the year than others. Choosing to go to Disney in the off season will often mean you'll get a better deal. It's a funny thing really, Disney never has a shortage of visitors whether it's peak season or not, yet you can always find a deal. This is likely another one of the big attractions as a vacation spot, there is always a good deal to be found.

There are a few ways to book your trip to Walt Disney world. First off you can book it online, via a travel agent or by phoning Disney. Each option has benefits, when calling the operator on the other end might be able to dig a bit deeper and find you a better deal than is available online or at your regular travel agent. If you do intend on calling to book your trip you should either call in the evening or early morning. Calling throughout the day is the busier time, and you'll be more rushed to book and get off the phone so that operators can serve other clients.

Another attraction to consider when planning your trip to Disney is the special events they hold. While you likely won't find a deal during those special events it can make your vacation that much more enjoyable. Attractions such as concerts for children under five, or special character appearances often occur but aren't part of Disney's regular attractions. Also keep a watch for Disney anniversary specials. Catching specials that don't happen all the time can create wonderful vacation memories, and be that much more fun for you and your family.

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